DR. JOHNSON

1961 - 1964

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Our source of help for the young Pastor came from one of our most faithful ministerial sons, Dr. Laurence Folkemer, who by this time was Professor of Systematic Theology at the Seminary in Gettysburg. Dr. Folkemer gave much of his valuable time during 1961 to preach at the 8:30 and 11:00 A.M. Sunday services, as well as attending to other ministerial duties.
Miss Zumbrun, our Church secretary, kept the administrative end of Church activity well organized with the help of Miss LaVerne Cunningham, as office assistant. To help with the visitation, Mrs. Marie Boylan, who began her duties in 1956, continued her sincere efforts.

Pastor Gatzke served under these conditions for one year until a new senior pastor was located. He stayed one more year, resigning as assistant pastor in September 1962, to pursue his interest in establishing a Lutheran Mission in Bel Air, Maryland. An organizational meeting of this successful venture was held on October 20, 1962, at which time The Church of the Good Shepherd was received into the Lutheran Church of America. Mindful of the important part Pastor Gatzke played in Christ Church and being interested in the growth of the Christian Church, Christ Church gave to the Mission Church a gift of $10,000.

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The Senior Pastor, for whom everyone waited, came on October 15, 1961. Dr. Warren C. Johnson, a minister whose past work reflected the World Mission of the Church became the fourth Senior Pastor of Christ Lutheran Church in South Baltimore. Dr. Johnson was born in Schenectady, New York and served in churches in Pennsylvania before coming to Second English Lutheran Church, Baltimore, Maryland, in 1939 where he stayed for six years. Later, Pastor Johnson became one of the Secretaries of the Board of Foreign Missions of the United Lutheran Church in America. After accepting the call to serve at Christ Church, Pastor Johnson became recognized as a very competent preacher of the Word of God, who always demonstrated the warmth of a Christian personality and deep spiritual concern for those whom he served. His major thrust was for the greatness of the Church of Christ.

One year and two months after Dr. Johnson became our pastor J. Brooks Moore was called to serve as Visitation Pastor. Before coming to Baltimore, December 2, 1962 Pastor Moore served pastorates in New Jersey and was a missionary for one year in British Guiana. Pastor Moore was well liked by the people to whom he ministered, giving them comfort and encouragement in their hour of need.

While these pastoral changes were being made other changes were occurring in the organization of this great congregation. Our 11:00 A.M. Sunday services were still being broadcast over radio Station WCBM. Sponsorships were encouraged and the money was used for benevolence purposes. The adult choir, with rehearsal every Thursday evening, still had paid soloists, but the children's choirs were down to two groups - Junior and Intermediate, rehearsing on Friday afternoons. The Children's Chapel services carried approximately 90 worshippers in 1960. When some of these children reached confirmation age in 1963 they discovered that two years of catechetical instruction were required with the 7th graders in the first year meeting on Saturday morning, while the 8th graders, in the second year of instruction, met on Sunday morning. Later after the merger of the Lutheran

Churches took place, a three year instruction period was required.

The Sunday School attendance started dropping in 1961. With an enrollment of a little more than 800 an average Sunday found about 600 people attending classes. Elective courses were introduced, a Young Married Couples Class was started, buses were sent out to gather the members from neighboring communities, and special courses were offered to the Sunday School teachers. In 1964 a new curriculum, endorsed by the Lutheran Church in America, was instituted to make the Gospel of Christ more real.

There were also other changes caused by the merger of the four Lutheran bodies in 1962 to form the Lutheran Church in America. In 1964 our congregation voted on a new constitution, which had been adopted by the Lutheran Church in America at that body's conception.

This called for unification of the women's organizations so our United Lutheran Church Women (originally the Missionary Society) and the Ladies Society together became the Lutheran Church Women in January 1964, with five groups meeting once a month at various times (day and evening) and 5 general meetings held yearly. One big change in this organization was the stipulation that all money collected must be through a free will offering. Any money making events, such as Oyster Suppers, which had been served annually since 1936 were discontinued. The last of these great affairs was held December 4-5, 1963 at which time the hard working members realized a profit of over $3,000.

District Leaders and a Telephone Committee, organized in 1957, were conscientiously pursuing their responsibility twice a year to contact every member of the Church to encourage better attendance and participation in communion. For the semi-shut ins special 4:00 P.M. services were held in October and January to make it easier for those members to partake of the Lord's Supper.

Even so there were from 150-200 communicants who were completely shut-in, so the Pastors gave them communion at home or hospital.

Since the fall of 1955 a choice of two morning services were available - 8:30 and 11:00 A.M. The Sunday evening worship was still being held, but with more and more outside interests, especially T.V., and more of the older parishioners living farther and farther from Charles and Hill Streets, the attendance became progressively smaller until on May 24, 1964, when the last evening service of the season was held, the Church Council voted to discontinue it altogether.

In order to keep people from attending too many meetings, especially at the Christmas season, a consolidated Christmas Surprise was held in 1957 and for three years thereafter in the form of a play and refreshments. In 1964 another effort was made in this direction and has continued ever since. Members and friends bring a gift for a needy child, enjoy a light supper and participate in some form of entertainment. These affairs are very festive, especially with all the decorations in the Fellowship Hall.

This decorating, done by the Youth Group, was one attempt at giving the young people a feeling of belonging and having a special place in the life of the Church. Many ways had been tried to reach that segment of the younger church members which was turning its back to the Church.

Senior High Luther League meetings were switched to Friday and Saturday evenings in 1957-1959, with an intermediate group still meeting on Sunday evening. In 1963 the Leagues were reorganized and all ages 12-18 started meeting as one group. Retreats were started in 1957 at Camp Druid Hill and with the construction of the Lutheran Camp, Mar-Lu-Ridge, these yearly week-end gatherings were held there, beginning in 1961.

Record Hops were organized in 1958 and held every Friday from 8:30 to 11:00 P.M., with the rules "no dungarees, pedal pushers or Bermuda shorts". Would you believe 50 teen-agers attended each week? These Friday night groups led to a Teen Center established in 1964.

The Boy Scout program continued through the years and was reorganized in 1962, with weekly meetings now on Monday evening. Girl Scout Troops were started in 1939, 1947 and again in 1953, but never developed into permanence.

The congregation added another son to the list of these in full-time Christian ministry, Ralph R. Welsh, who worked at Christ Church the summer of 1962 as Vacation Church School Director, youth leader and visitation student pastor. When he graduated from Gettysburg Seminary in 1964, Mr. Welsh was on the church staff for a year, assisting wherever he could until he was called as Assistant Pastor at St. John's Lutheran Church, Linthicum Heights, Maryland.

Christ Church had a beautiful carillon of 16 bells, given by two faithful members, in December 1958. It was installed in a steel tower erected near the rear entrance to the Church. This electrically operated instrument, with an electric clock, which can play Westminster Chimes on the quarter hour, strike the hour and rings the prayer bell, and has a keyboard near the organ console in the Chancel from which nearly all of the hymns of the Church can be played. Frank Hubbard, a member of Christ Church, with a Music Education Master's Degree from Peabody, has been our carillonneur since June 1959.

Changes in the Church's organizational structure at large led to changes right here in Baltimore. The Baltimore Inner Mission Society, became known as the "Lutheran Social Services". This group attempted to institute a South Baltimore Social Mission with Christ Church and several other South Baltimore Church, assuming financial responsibility.

On February 23, 1964 the congregation was to vote on the proposal, but no action was taken because sufficient time had not been allotted to study it.

On March 8, 1964, the Church Council recommended the following for adoption:

"In order to assist our established congregation in making the love of Christ known to all persons in the South Baltimore Community -- to provide a specialized

Lutheran Social Missions program that will attempt to meet some of the cut - standing spiritual and social needs in the area, it is recommended that the proposed South Baltimore Social Mission plan be adopted."

With the uncertainty of the direction our congregation was headed and without a full understanding of the details of the pgogram, the people of Christ Church were split in half when the vote was taken. The following May (1964) both Dr. Johnson and Pastor Moore handed in their regignations. These two events proved to be turning points in the history of Christ Church.

-6- (Dr. Johnson)

Work Copy

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